



**GREATER DERRY | LONDONDERRY**  
*Chamber of Commerce*

New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee  
21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10  
Concord, NH 03301

February 18, 2016

Dear Chairman Honingberg and members of the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee:

On behalf of the more than 325 member businesses of the Greater Derry Londonderry Chamber of Commerce, please accept the enclosed op-ed outlining the Chamber's support of Eversource Energy and National Grid's permit application for the Merrimack Valley Reliability Project.

The op-ed was published in the Feb. 5 edition of the New Hampshire Business Review.

Regards,



Will Stewart  
President



# Southern NH transmission project should be OKd

## It's a way of enhancing the Merrimack Valley's economic development prospects

**INFRASTRUCTURE** • BY WILL STEWART

A few days before Christmas, the Greater Derry Londonderry Chamber of Commerce took part in a celebration marking the opening of Pettengill Road in Londonderry. As federal, state and local officials gathered for the ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open this three-quarter-mile stretch of road near Manchester-Boston Regional Airport that will open up nearly 1,000 acres of prime industrial land to development, optimism about our region's future economic development prospects was palpable.

And while the chamber shares in this optimism, we are also concerned that our region might not be able to fully realize this unparalleled economic development opportunity, not to mention those afforded by the coming expansion of Interstate 93, the construction of Exit 4A, the buildout of Woodmont Commons and the projected

growth around Exit 3 in Windham, if we don't find ways to improve our energy challenges.

Among the region's energy challenges is our electric transmission infrastructure. Since 2008, long before any of the above-mentioned economic development projects began moving forward, ISO New England, the independent operator of the New England electric grid, has noted that the existing electric transmission resources are inadequate to serve the needs of southern New Hampshire and greater Boston.

To be fair, a lack of adequate transmission infrastructure is just one of several energy challenges we face in southern New Hampshire. But it is something that is being addressed locally by Eversource Energy and National Grid, whose Merrimack Valley Reliability Project has been selected by ISO New England as its preferred solution to strengthen the area's electric system in response to said aging infrastructure as well as forecasted load growth.

If approved by state regulators, the Merrimack Valley

Reliability Project will see the construction of a new overhead 345-kilovolt line along 24.5 miles of existing rights-of-way, 18 miles of which run through the New Hampshire towns of Londonderry, Hudson, Windham, and Pelham, for a total New Hampshire investment of \$82 million.

This project, which will expand transmission reliability and capacity, will not solve southern New Hampshire's energy problems by itself. But it is a start. And it is for that reason that the Greater Derry Londonderry Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors supports the Merrimack Valley Reliability Project as a means of maintaining and improving the region's economic health.

The chamber urges regulators to approve the project in a timely manner as the greater Derry-Londonderry region's future economic development prospects are contingent upon a reliable and affordable source of electricity. **NHBR**

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*Will Stewart is president of the Greater Derry Londonderry Chamber of Commerce.*